

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF GEORGIA
SAVANNAH DIVISION

Torrie Smith,

Plaintiff,

v.

Diversified Consultants, Inc.; and
DOES 1-10, inclusive,

Defendants.

Civil Action No.: **CV 4 1 1 - 3 1 1**

**COMPLAINT
JURY TRIAL DEMANDED**

For this Complaint, the Plaintiff, Torrie Smith, by undersigned counsel, states as follows:

JURISDICTION

1. This action arises out of Defendants' repeated violations of the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, 15 U.S.C. § 1692, *et seq.* ("FDCPA"), and the invasions of Plaintiff's personal privacy by the Defendants and its agents in their illegal efforts to collect a consumer debt.

2. Supplemental jurisdiction exists pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1367.

3. Venue is proper in this District pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b), in that the Defendants transact business in this District and a substantial portion of the acts giving rise to this action occurred in this District.

PARTIES

4. Plaintiff, Torrie Smith ("Plaintiff"), is an adult individual residing in Savannah, Georgia, and is a "consumer" as the term is defined by 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(3).

5. Defendant Diversified Consultants, Inc. ("Diversified"), is a Florida business entity with an address of 10550 Deerwood Park Boulevard, Suite 309, Jacksonville, Florida,

32256-2805, operating as a collection agency, and is a "debt collector" as the term is defined by 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(6).

6. Does 1-10 (the "Collectors") are individual collectors employed by Diversified and whose identities are currently unknown to the Plaintiff. One or more of the Collectors may be joined as parties once their identities are disclosed through discovery.

7. Diversified at all times acted by and through one or more of the Collectors.

ALLEGATIONS APPLICABLE TO ALL COUNTS

A. The Debt

8. A financial obligation (the "Debt") was allegedly incurred to a creditor (the "Creditor") by a third party, Leslie Bryant (the "Debtor").

9. The Debt arose from services provided by the Creditor which were primarily for family, personal or household purposes and which meets the definition of a "debt" under 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(5).

10. The Debt was purchased, assigned or transferred to Diversified for collection, or Diversified was employed by the Creditor to collect the Debt.

11. The Defendants attempted to collect the Debt and, as such, engaged in "communications" as defined in 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(2).

B. Diversified Engages in Harassment and Abusive Tactics

12. Within the past year, Diversified contacted Plaintiff in an attempt to collect a Debt allegedly owed by Plaintiff's neighbor, Leslie Bryant (the "Debtor").

13. During the initial conversation and during every conversation thereafter, Plaintiff informed Diversified that the Debtor was her neighbor and did not reside with Plaintiff, and provided Diversified with the Debtor's telephone number.

14. During the initial conversation and during every conversation thereafter, Plaintiff instructed Diversified to cease all contacts with her.

15. Thereafter, Diversified continued to place calls to Plaintiff at an excessive and harassing rate, sometimes causing Plaintiff's telephone to ring daily up to four times per day. The constant calls caused a great amount of distress and frustration to Plaintiff.

C. Plaintiff Suffered Actual Damages

16. The Plaintiff has suffered and continues to suffer actual damages as a result of the Defendants' unlawful conduct.

17. As a direct consequence of the Defendants' acts, practices and conduct, the Plaintiff suffered and continues to suffer from humiliation, anger, anxiety, emotional distress, fear, frustration and embarrassment.

COUNT I
VIOLATIONS OF THE FDCPA 15 U.S.C. § 1692, et seq.

18. The Plaintiff incorporates by reference all of the above paragraphs of this Complaint as though fully stated herein.

19. The Defendants' conduct violated 15 U.S.C. § 1692d in that Defendants engaged in behavior the natural consequence of which was to harass, oppress, or abuse the Plaintiff in connection with the collection of a debt.

20. The Defendants' conduct violated 15 U.S.C. § 1692d(5) in that Defendants caused a phone to ring repeatedly and engaged the Plaintiff in telephone conversations, with the intent to annoy and harass.

21. The foregoing acts and omissions of the Defendants constitute numerous and multiple violations of the FDCPA, including every one of the above-cited provisions.

22. The Plaintiff is entitled to damages as a result of Defendants' violations.

COUNT II
VIOLATION OF THE GEORGIA FAIR BUSINESS PRACTICES ACT,
O.C.G.A. § 10-1-390, et seq.

23. The Plaintiff incorporates by reference all of the above paragraphs of this Complaint as though fully stated herein.

24. The Plaintiff is a "consumer" as the term is defined by O.C.G.A. § 10-1-392(6).

25. The Plaintiff incurred a Debt as a result of engaging into "[c]onsumer transactions" as the term is defined by O.C.G.A. § 10-1-392(10).

26. The Defendants' unfair or deceptive acts to collect the Debt occurred in commerce, in violation of O.C.G.A. § 10-1-393(a).

27. The Plaintiff suffered mental anguish, emotional distress and other damages in an amount to be proven at trial.

28. Defendant's failure to comply with these provisions constitutes an unfair or deceptive act under O.C.G.A. § 10-1-393(a) and, as such, the Plaintiff is entitled to damages plus reasonable attorney's fees.

COUNT III
INVASION OF PRIVACY BY INTRUSION UPON SECLUSION

29. The Plaintiff incorporates by reference all of the above paragraphs of this Complaint as though fully stated herein.

30. The Restatement of Torts, Second, § 652(b) defines intrusion upon seclusion as, "One who intentionally intrudes...upon the solitude or seclusion of another, or his private affairs or concerns, is subject to liability to the other for invasion of privacy, if the intrusion would be highly offensive to a reasonable person."

31. Georgia further recognizes the Plaintiff's right to be free from invasions of privacy, thus Defendant violated Georgia state law.

32. The Defendant intentionally intruded upon Plaintiff's right to privacy by continually harassing the Plaintiff with numerous calls.

33. The conduct of the Defendant in engaging in the illegal collection activities resulted in multiple invasions of privacy in such a way as would be considered highly offensive to a reasonable person.

34. As a result of the intrusions and invasions, the Plaintiff is entitled to actual damages in an amount to be determined at trial from Defendant.

35. All acts of Defendant and its agents were committed with malice, intent, wantonness, and recklessness, and as such, Defendant is subject to punitive damages.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, the Plaintiff prays that judgment be entered against Defendants:

1. Actual damages pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k(a)(1) and O.C.G.A. § 10-1-399(a) against Defendants;
2. Statutory damages of \$1,000.00 pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k(a)(2)(A) against Defendants;
3. Treble damages pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 10-1-399(c) against Defendants;
4. Costs of litigation and reasonable attorney's fees pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k(a)(3) and O.C.G.A. § 10-1-399(d) against Defendants;
5. Actual damages from Defendants for the all damages including emotional distress suffered as a result of the intentional, reckless, and/or negligent FDCPA violations and intentional, reckless, and/or negligent invasions of privacy in an amount to be determined at trial for the Plaintiff;

6. Punitive damages pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 10-1-399(a) against Defendants;
and
7. Such other and further relief as may be just and proper.

TRIAL BY JURY DEMANDED ON ALL COUNTS

Dated: December 12, 2011

Respectfully submitted,

s/ Cara Hergenroether, Esq.
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